

U.S. Military Academy - Officer's Quarters No. 21  
(Family Housing)

HABS No. NY-5708-30

North side of Wilson Road, in the elbow south of  
intersection with Kinsley Hill Road

U.S. Military Academy  
West Point  
Orange County  
New York

HABS  
NY  
30-10870  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY - OFFICER'S QUARTERS NO. 21  
(FAMILY HOUSING)

LOCATION: North side of Wilson Road, in the elbow south of intersection with Kinsley Hill Road, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, Orange County, New York.

USGS, West Point Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18.587050.4581610.

PRESENT OWNER  
AND OCCUPANT: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.

PRESENT USE: Family Housing - Colonel.

SIGNIFICANCE: Quarters No. 21 is an example of the highly successful officers' quarters designed for the U.S. Military Academy by the office of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson. Its character, neo-gothic, reflects the general theme of their work at the Academy, providing, also, an exceptional example of an American Arts and Crafts interior.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1905-1910.
2. Architect: Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson, Architects, Boston and New York.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Military Academy, Department of the Army.
4. Builder: Broderick and Wind Engineering and Construction Company. The construction was completed by the U.S. Fidelity and Guaranty Company, a bonding company, after a default and delay. The bonding company contract is dated September 20, 1906. The Mitchell Vance Company supplied the original light fixtures (Annual Report, 1908).
5. Original plans and construction: Quarters No. 21 was part of a group consisting of Quarters 25, 32, 34, 42, 45 and 48. The total cost of these quarters was \$270,292.70.
6. Alterations and additions: There have been no major alterations or additions.

- B. Historical Context: Quarters No. 21 was one of the many quarters designed by the firm Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson as part of the early twentieth-century

expansion at the Academy. These particular quarters were intended for captains and lieutenants and were approved in 1904. For the historical and architectural context of this building within the overall development of West Point see HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 2: "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy."

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Quarters No. 21 is representative of the work of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson at the U.S. Military Academy in the first decade of the 20th century. The brick exterior walls with limestone detailing and painted wood trim were designed to create a Tudor Gothic appearance that would be distinctive on a campus that, at that time, was composed of a wide variety of styles. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson was, without doubt, the most prominent architectural firm at West Point in this century. Their major building campaign at the Academy is a clear reflection of the "medievalist" craftsman philosophy of Ralph Adams Cram. This is seen not only in their other buildings at West Point, but also in their work nationally.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Quarters No. 21 is an "L" shaped building with projecting gable masses on the northern arm and projecting flat roofed verandas at the corners fronting on Wilson Road. The south elevation of the west wing is the principal facade, being 95'-6" in length compared to 92'-8" for the north wing. The west wing measures 45'-8" at its deepest point, although the basic mass measures 31'-2". The north wing is 48'-8" wide at its deepest point, and 21'-4" wide elsewhere. The building is principally two stories above a basement with a third floor tucked under the gable roof. The building is four bays along the south facade and eight bays on the east facade. The south facade is bi-laterally symmetrical, while the east facade is irregular. The three story gabled facades and two story window groupings combine to develop an overall feeling of verticality appropriate to the creation of a medieval appearance.
2. Foundations: Concrete was used for the footing, while stone is used for the foundation walls below grade, with brick above.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of Quarters No. 21 are a red brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern with brick, limestone and bluestone detailing. The surfaces are very crisp and planar.

Limestone is used for the sills of the windows, while splayed brick lintels composed of both headers and stretchers complete the exterior window detailing. Additionally, limestone is used as a capping element to the veranda "buttresses." Bluestone beltcourses exist in the gable peaks in the west wing and bluestone is also used for the chimney capping and for the top of the parapets in the gable ends.

4. Structural systems, framing: The walls are load-bearing brick faced with brick on the exterior and load-bearing and non-load-bearing wood stud partitions covered with plaster and/or wood paneling on the interior. Floors are supported by wood joists and the roofing system is composed of wood rafters.
5. Porches, verandas, buttresses, chimneys: Three verandas exist at the southwest, southeast and northeast corners of the building. Each is 2 x 1 bays and measure approximately 23' by 14'. Limestone caps the "buttresses" and bluestone caps the parapet walls. The bay openings are supported by a segmental brick arch. The one-story verandas have flat roofs and so are "separated" from the main building mass. The verandas have recently been converted to seven porches through the addition of aluminum screens. The floors are concrete and the ceilings are composed of 1" x 3" wood beaded tongue-and-groove paneling.

The rear porches correspond to the rear entries and have heavy chamfered wood posts, square railings and balusters and wood brackets supporting a built-up flat roof. A brick foundation supports the wood floors.

Quarters No. 21 has seven brick chimneys: four located along the west wing gable ridge, two incorporated into the north wing gable roof, and one protruding from the north gable wall. All chimneys are rectangular with bluestone caps, except for the chimney in the north gable end which has protruding brickwork running vertically to its bluestone cap.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: There are six doorways leading into Quarters No. 21: three main entries from the verandas and three rear entries in the center of each unit. The doorways have wood trim set inside the brick openings, and all retain their original doors.

The main entry doors are wood with three panels below and six lights above; they measure 3'-6" x 7'-8" x 2 1/2". The wood rear doors also have three panels below and six lights above and measure 3'-0" x 7'-2" x 2".

- b. Windows: The windows, neatly arranged in vertical bays on the south and east facades, are almost exclusively one-over-one double-hung wood sash. Exceptions include the leaded quarrel light wood casement windows in the stair hall (the lead glazing in the stair hall on the south facade to the east has all been replaced by a single pane) and the leaded quarrel light double-hung wood sash windows in the gable peaks.

The back elevation has a decidedly horizontal window arrangement, with one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows existing throughout. Basement windows are primarily pivoting casements of six lights, with the exception of a pair of one-over-one double-hung sash windows in the south end of the east elevation.

All windows have a limestone sill, a splayed brick lintel and painted wood trim.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof is covered with multi-colored slate randomly placed.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The eaves are made of wood. A narrow brick cornice line is created by two projecting brick courses below the connection of roof and walls.
- c. Dormers: One dormer exists on the rear of the west wing above the westernmost entry. It is gabled, with a slate roof and wood sides and contains a pair of casement windows with six panes of glass each.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Quarters No. 21 is a triplex with two identical units arranged symmetrically about a north-south party wall in the west wing, while the third unit, cross-shaped in overall plan, extends to the north to the rear of the eastern unit. All three plans are similar conceptually with rooms flanking a central hall/stairway (front and rear stairways and halls included). A parlor, dining room, library and kitchen are located on the first floor; four bedrooms and two baths on the second floor; and two bedrooms, two storerooms and a bath off an "L" shaped hall on the third floor. Quarters No. 21A was surveyed for the purposes of this report.

There is a definite flow of open space between the hall and the parlor and dining room. Openings (4'-6" x 7') exist between the hall and the other two rooms which open up at either end of it. Access to the rear hall and stairs, and to the library, is also made from this main hall. The kitchen opens to the rear hall and to the dining room through a swinging door.

The second floor has four bedrooms that open off a long central hall with the main stairway in the middle. No two doors open directly into one another, creating a greater sense of privacy.

2. Stairways: Two stairways serve Quarters No. 21A. The main stair connects the first and second levels only and is located in the central area of the front (east) facade. The stairway, a "U" return type stair, is situated in a 7'-7" x 14'-0" space with carved oak posts, square wood balusters and wood rail, and oak risers and treads. The rear stairway, connecting the basement to the third floor, is also a "U" return stair in a 6' x 7' space, with plain wood posts, balusters and rails and wood risers and treads.
3. Flooring: Flooring is oak on the first floor, heart pine on the second and third floors and concrete in the basement.
4. Walls and ceiling finish: There is a great variety of wall finishes on the first level. The entry vestibule and main hall have wainscoting to 7' and vertical 1" x 4" oak boards at 18" on center over plaster walls. The parlor has a 7' wainscoting with a molded cornice trim at the top over plaster walls. The library has a 7' wainscoting with 1" x 4" oak at 4' on center. The dining room has a 7' wainscoting, a

rail at 5', beneath which are 1" x 4" vertical oak boards at 18" on center over a plaster wall. All these rooms have a heavy molded cornice below the plaster ceiling. The kitchen has been remodeled.

The walls on the second and third floors are of plaster, while the basement has plaster, brick and stone walls. The ceilings are plaster throughout.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The interior doors of Quarters No. 21A are four-panel wood doors measuring 2'-10" x 7'-0" x 1 3/4", with plain wood trim on the first floor and beaded wood trim on the second, third and basement levels.

6. Built-in features and hardware: The most distinctive built-in features exist on the first floor. An apparently original radiator cover exists in the main hall, while the parlor contains an attractive fireplace surround with paired oak pilasters rising 6'-6" flanking the oak mantel, and capped with cornices supporting a lintel at 7'.

7. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating: Steam radiators provide heat for the building.

b. Lighting: Incandescent lighting is used throughout, although the kitchen has fluorescent lighting as well.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Quarters No. 21 is oriented to the east and south fronting on the 90° turn in Wilson Road and following the contour of the hillside on which it is set. The land drops off sharply to the east and south with a wooded hillside below. A retaining wall and rock outcropping are situated on the heavily wooded hillside that rises to the north and west. A 5' granite retaining wall creates a grass terrace along the two front facades. A small flat roofed, brick garage is situated to the west with a service road behind. Directly to the north are a row of five similar duplexes constructed in the late 19th century. A few deciduous trees are scattered about the east and north at the site.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: Original ink-on-linen working drawings are in the Facilities Engineer's Office, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, U.S. Military Academy. Subsequent alteration drawings are also found there.

B. Early Views: Early photographs can be found in the U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. Some of these are reproduced in the Grashof and Lange volumes of this project.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Records, U.S. Military Academy Archives and Special Collections. See bibliographic essay in the Lange volume of this project for a listing of record groups.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Annual Reports, U.S. Military Academy Archives.

Grashof, Bethanie C. "Building Analysis and Preservation Guidelines for Category I and Selected Category II Buildings at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York," Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

Lange, Robie S. "West Point: An Overview of the History and Physical Development of the United States Military Academy," Historic American Buildings Survey, 1983. HABS No. NY-5708.

D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: The Records of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation is part of a multi-year project sponsored by the National Park Service and the United States Military Academy, explained in the United States Military Academy, HABS No. NY-5708, Volume 1, "Methodology." This written documentation was prepared by Travis C. McDonald, Jr. and Timothy Lindblad, architectural historians, in 1982-1985 based on fieldwork conducted in 1982 and 1984.

ADDENDUM TO

U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY,

OFFICER'S QUARTERS

(U.S.M.A., Family Housing)

(U.S.M.A., Building No. 21)

West Side of Wilson Road, North of

intersection of Wilson Road and Kinsley Hill Road

U.S. Military Academy

West Point

Orange County

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING

National Park Service

Department of the Interior

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